

government; but, there is no up-front investment required because they already own the capital equipment (used in production and test) and have skilled labor. The likely result is no investment is made. The effort goes sole-source to the prime vendor, and the out-year risk has jumped yet another notch. This is especially, even catastrophically, true if that contractor's business base contracts as it responds to the market's supply and demand.

The investment decision would have provided the opportunity to reduce life cycle costs for multiple weapon systems. This is the "greater-good" concept that the

SORAP ignores. It is the "best value" loophole in action. The decision appeared to be the "best value," but it was measured in that year only, and we again declare victory before results. The lost savings in out-years would have provided needed funds for future modernization efforts.

At the same time, it would keep the workforce at the Air Logistics Centers current on new technology. Instead, the near-term, expedient decision relegates the blue-collar workforce to antique fixer/dealer status. As an aside, ask yourself, "What youth today would want a job fixing half-century old (or older)

parts at a government depot, when they could work for a defense contractor making higher pay repairing new technology?" Indeed, the implications are far reaching.

Determining "best value" during the SORAP has not been based on long-term investment principles for the entire force. Further, until there is a fundamental change in policy, there is no chance this trend will naturally reverse. According to DoDD 5000.2-R,⁸ cost must be viewed as an independent variable. Accordingly, SMs are required to establish aggressive but realistic objectives for all programs and follow through by trading perfor-

Federal Acquisition Regulation Plain Language Initiative

The Defense Acquisition Regulations Council (DARC) and the Civilian Agency Acquisition Council (CAAC) are actively pursuing implementation of the President's memorandum of June 1, 1998, "Plain Language in Government Writing." The President's memorandum directed Executive Departments and Agencies to use plain language in future rulemaking documents and consider rewriting regulations in plain language as time permits. The National Performance Review and the Office of Management and Budget also have emphasized the importance of using plain language in government writing.

The DARC and CAAC have issued a *Federal Acquisition Regulation Drafting Guide* that applies to all amendments to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The guide encourages simple writing through the use of common everyday words, short sentences and paragraphs, logical organization, and the active voice. The DARC and CAAC recently issued a completely revised FAR Part 25, "Foreign Acquisition," that incorporates the principles in the guide. The DARC and CAAC also recently

issued a proposed rule amending the FAR to include drafting principles that enhance a common understanding of the regulation. The proposed rule covers topics such as arrangement of regulations within the FAR and conventions for interpreting the FAR.

Currently, the DARC and CAAC are working on several FAR amendments to further the plain language initiative. These FAR amendments include a plain language rewrite of FAR Part 27, "Patents, Data and Copyrights," and a FAR revision to conform definitions in the FAR to the drafting guide. OFPP is working with the CAAC to ensure that the introductory descriptions of regulations in Federal Acquisition Circulars, which disseminate regulations amending the FAR, adhere to plain language principles.

The CAAC and DARC are committed to improving the FAR by adherence to the principles in the guide. A copy of the guide is available at the **www.ARNET.gov** Web site.